Post 9.5.68

"We Await an Apology"

I speak only as an individual admirer and supporter of the late Senator Robert Kennedy, but I suspect that I voice the sentiments of many more, in suggesting that perhaps the greatest offense against taste and decency (a judgement admittedly difficult to make) which occurred inside the Convention Hall last week was the sordid attempt of the managers of the Convention to cut off the spontaneous demonstration by the delegates mourning his memory.

When Carl Albert, ordinarily a decent and competent man, obeyed the instruction of John Criswell (who had evidently just received a phone call from Someone Else) and attempted to gavel down the memorial demonstration after only four minutes, he turned sorrow into rage, and grief into defiance. When Mr. Criswell, well known to be a wholly owned subsidiary of President Johnson, then enlisted the support of Mayor Daley's hooligans in the gallery to shout down the Kennedy mourners on the floor, the damage to our Party was complete. When the subsequent "one minute of silence," in honor of Martin Luther King was turned into 10 seconds by the chairman, it was only predictable. The delegates not controlled from the White House were—evidently—not to be permitted to mourn their dead.

We await an apology.

FRANK MANKIEWICZ.

(The writer was press secretary to Senator Robert F. Kennedy.)

Bethesda.